C 173 P 174 and that the people in the mountains are the slaves of the Allouagues who fled to the mountains and bred there. The result is that now they C [567 266] only rarely show mercy to male slaves, but rather they kill and eat them. The reason they are white may be because of the cold.

C 142 Regarding their appearance, the Caribs are of good stature and well-proportioned, strong, robust, usually fat, and healthy. They are not C [304] at all deformed except that several are flat-nosed, because their mothers flattened their foreheads and noses at birth. Their natural color is a very bronzed olive. They seem redder because of the C [302] annatto [rocou or urucu] they redden themselves with every day. They all have black hair and cannot tolerate red or blond hair. Very few of them are bald, and they make fun of those who are. They are no more thieving than the French, and even less so.

C 157 As for their temperament, they are all melancholic, sad, and somber; and their faces show it. They rarely speak if not spoken to. For savages they are not too stupid. They are curious about and very skillful in the things they apply themselves to, such as making beds and baskets, fishing, hunting, and shooting the bow and arrow. They climb swiftly and nimbly, jump and [48] swim, and would undoubtedly be capable of greater things.

A young man who was a captive among them told them some story from the Holy Scripture; they questioned him about it and conceived doubts that were not without point.

They are rather generous among themselves and give each other what they have; in like fashion they ask freely. They do not act in this way with us, the French, because they give us nothing and are always asking for something and are not discouraged by a refusal.

They are not naturally cruel, except toward their enemies. They are dangerous when intoxicated and fight among themselves, but outside of that they are easy to get along with.

They are extremely lazy and would rather eat less and work less. They scarcely think of tomorrow and stock no provisions except manioc and sweet potatoes which they plant in season. Very often they find themselves short. They care for neither gold, silver, nor C precious stones.

462 They have their work divided between the men and women. Their honor is offended if they are not esteemed for what they think they are. The men never touch the ordinary work of women, believing that they would degenerate.

756 of The Baron, who is one of the chiefs of Dominica, when they called
787 a boye for one of their sick girls [52] and made his devil appear, heard him speak in a very clear voice. He wanted to go in with a burning torch, but the women would not let him enter, and he did not want to insist, since he didn't yet know the language well enough.

The wife of this chief wanted to make one of her daughters a boye, with the help of another boye. But she could not, although the girl was willing and fasted as ordered. The old witch used for an excuse that the girl ate something that she had been forbidden to.

When the sick are cured, they give a feast for the boye, who sometimes also calls his devil to the celebration. The boye and this
[302 scoundrel, if he is there, blacken the sick person with dye from the
386] genipa tree to conclude the farce.

754 Some people do not call the boyes when they want to speak to the devil. Digging in the earth where they know someone is buried, they extract bones or hair of the dead person, and put them in a gourd which they plug with cotton. The devil speaks to them through these bones or hairs and claims to be the soul of the dead person.

With these bones they even cast various sorts of spells to revenge themselves against their enemies. Some take the left-overs from the meal of their enemy and put them next to these bones of the dead, which, as we have said, bewitches them. Others put in blood from a wound, as it happened with a Carib who came to find Father Raymond at Guadeloupe in order to be baptized. Since it was not possible, however, at the time to instruct him he was sent back. This man, wanting to avenge the death of his brother, entered a hut and stabbed the one he thought to be the murderer of his brother, but who was not. The parents of the wounded man were not able to obtain satisfaction, since the other had made off. They soaked cotton in the blood of their son and put it with some of these bones, and the assailant was overcome by a weakness that caused his death after two years.

776 Father Raymond and his interpreter, upon asking a boye named
821 Sali how his god looked, were told that he was so old that his staff was all shiny from having been carried so long. The boye said that his god was the cause of storms or violent tempests.

During an eclipse of the sun or moon, they say that [53] it is mapoya [maboya] who eats it (we shall relate in the last chapter

821 what they mean by maboya). That is why they say laf'koua noquam th
the eating of the moon; laf'koua vicou the eating of the sun. When
821 one or the other[1] occurs, the women and young people dance all night,
535 and once they have started to dance they dare not quit before day.
They do not sing at all during this dance, but from time to time
utter doleful cries. During this gloomy silence, there is a girl or
woman who rattles little pebbles in a gourd and sings alone. The only
reason they have for this sad dance is that their food in the ground
would die without it.

In their dances, those just mentioned as well as others of re-
joicing, they do not hold each other with their hands, but each dances
alone. They put their feet together and jump, a little bent over,
putting one hand on their head, and the other on a buttock, and change
them constantly. This dance tires them so, that finally they are
completely exhausted.

785 Among their superstitions they have none more rigorous than their
fasts, and as they fast for several reasons and at different times, we
shall speak of each in its place.

805 Let us say here what would not be more appropriate elsewhere.
They calculate their year by the course of the Pleiades, which they
[821] call siric. They know several stars and know approximately when
802 they will have rain or wind. They count no higher than five; if they
have to say ten, they say: all my fingers. If twenty, they show
their feet and their hands, and they would not know how to say any
more.

CHAPTER IV

Their Ornaments

241 Our Caribs never wear clothes, neither men nor women, except
for a few chiefs when they come among us. They do not even cover
their shameful parts. This is contrary, nevertheless, to the custom
of the savages of the mainland, [54] where both men and women
have a sort of cotton band covering what nature is ashamed to show.

● 302 Men and women wear their hair long; at the front they cut it half-
way up the forehead and let it hang in the style of a little girl.

[1] [i.e. An eclipse of the moon or sun.--Analyst]

302 They separate the back from the front by a part which goes from temple to temple, leaving two small moustaches at the two temples. They gather all the rest behind the head and let it hang down their
301 back. When they go somewhere, they tuck it up behind the head very neatly and tie it with cords of cotton reddened with annatto, at the end of which is a small tassel or a woman's thimble with white glass beads. Some add to that a little fine white cotton which they spread on the bundle of their hair, with different-colored feathers which they stick in. Some also make, from the same material as their baskets, a form of crown which is colored and adorned with tufts of feathers all around, above and below, while others wear a form of headband. Still others make bonnets of the same material and wear them for fear of the cold or other inconveniences. But usually they are bareheaded.

302 The women comb the men's hair and grease it with oil to make it shine and become blacker. This is the first thing they do when they are going somewhere.

They do not permit their slaves to wear long hair. They singe the hairs of their legs and arms. They do not wear beards. And it is one of their perpetual amusements, when they have the leisure,
[304] to pluck out the hairs of their beard one by one with a knife. They pierce their ears, the cartilage of the nose between the nostrils, and the lower lip, to attach pendants of various sorts.

They redden all of their body with annatto. Sometimes they make themselves all black with genipa. At their great drinking parties they have themselves painted black as a Moor in a particular fashion.
[75] They most often use annatto because it also serves to keep the sun from burning them and protects them [55] from the sharpness of the sea water.

301 They sometimes wear large necklaces of white glass beads; sometimes they wear at their neck the wings of various birds which they let dangle over their shoulders and on their stomach. Others wear necklaces made of the teeth of cats, agoutis, or of the caï'cousi [caicouchi], which is believed to be the ounce (?). Most of them wear a whistle at their necks, often made from the bones of an enemy.

They also wear scarves of corded cotton, reddened with annatto, in the form of a cross, before and behind. The scarves are sometimes made from white glass beads. With these beads, they also

574 the civilities which it is customary to render to men. If someone
576 else greets them they respond with the women's greeting. [155]

When Caribs meet after a long period of absence from each other, they embrace each other impelled by reasons of joy or sadness. [516] Mutually resting their head on the shoulder of the other, each rests one knee on the ground. They begin a sad chant and go so far as to weep and sob, even continuing to weep for a long time after. This is especially true when the visitor arrives during a drinking party as I have seen happen at the arrival of a Balibi. [233]

302 When the Caribs go to feasts their women paint them red and wash their faces and wipe them. Then the women spread their fingers which are reddened with paint and press them on their husband's faces, which disguises their features so well that one has difficulty recognizing them. [298]

293 The skin of the jaguar has short, red hair. All the Caribs who have been to South America have such a skin. When they come to their feasts each carries his own in ostentation trailing it ten or twelve feet behind him, with the claws of the Mansfénix hawk arranged on two sticks across their backs. They believe that this communicates to them courage and valor. When they are gashed with the teeth of
752 an agouti and are bleeding they grind up the jaguar skin and rub the powder on the wound. This heals the wound very well without any inflammation or boils, even when they have been previously rubbed with pepper and pimento. [100]

785 I have seen young men at feasts stand in the middle of the carbet with their hands upon their heads allowing anyone to beat them with arrows, similar to blows given with the flat of a sword. I have seen others just after the greater part of their bodies had been gashed, who allowed people to rub them all over with the body of a Mansfénix together with a great deal of pepper which had been crushed between two rocks. God knows that they become hot after that. Others, not at the time of these drinking parties, stood up in the same place, and old women beat them with pineapples leaves which they hold by the points. With the spines they scratch them by dragging them across their bodies, for the pineapple leaves are like saws except that the spines are more treacherously sharp and pointed. All of this is designated by the term "He has passed by the lances." [132]

551 guests at the drinking party said, "I desire to be named, name me." Then the one in front of him laughter and shouted "Hello, so and so." Captain Baron burst into roaring laughter, and he opened his basket and brought out a package of glass beads and rewarded in this way the honor that had been paid to him. [221] The mothers do not lack
864 tender affection for their children, who while young are reluctant to leave their mother's breast during the day or even during the night. It is miraculous that the mothers do not smother them when they are drunk after the drinking parties, although I never heard tell of such an accident while I was among them. If their husbands leave them, the wives keep all the children, and do not give the husband any unless forced to do so, for when the children grow up they become a source of support and subsistence. [282]

302 All the Caribs, men and women, have the same hair style. In
304 order that this hair style is made possible, soon after the child is born a woman is chosen who kneads the head to make it larger at the top and smooths the forehead to be sloping down to the eyes. She flattens the forehead as well as the head, for they think that their beauty depends upon this. All the hair on the front of the head falls in front and is cut as it is done for small girls in France. The side hair covers only the ears, and both men and women let the rest of their hair fall on the back of the head. The mother, for almost two years, sits down during the day and puts one of her child's legs on one of her thighs with its head on her other thigh. When the child is asleep she opens her right hand and puts it on the child's forehead. She leans her left elbow on it and reclines her own head against it. She sleeps in this way with the child in order that the flattening persists. Because this is done they have big eyes which protrude from their heads. I have not noticed that this would cause their flat noses. [145]

955 The Carib women take a child by the hand and lift it high off the ground or from a hammock without worrying about hurting it. The child according to the habit which he has been taught places his bent left knee on the side of his mother, leaving the other foot hanging. The mother grasps him under the right arm and carries him in this way on a short trip. But if she should be traveling far she has a small cotton hammock which she puts around her neck and hangs on one side in which she carries the child. [311] As soon as the children are strong enough, their mothers put them in the middle of the yard where they have cleared out the stones. Here the children play, roll in the dust,

302 [245] The Caribs plant bichet trees near their houses, for otherwise the birds would spoil them. They make urucu from the fruit of this tree. It produces its fruit in bunches, the fruit looking like the stone of a peach although it is not so hard. They boil it in water and when the water is tepid they rub this fruit between their hands in the water. The paint falls to the bottom and makes a layer like wax. They mix it with powder from charred sandle wood, because otherwise its brilliance would hurt their eyes. Then they add oil to the mixture, and redden themselves often with it. This is their best shirt. This paint fills their pores, prevents seawater from drying on their body, and also repels the mosquitos and kills chiggers. [79] They crush urucu on a flat stone in the same way our painters use a marble slab. They mix it with oil and make a mask on their face as thick as a 30 sous coin, when they go to a drinking party. [240] When a man plans to go to a feast he will stand up and his wife draws curves and lines from the shoulders down to the buttocks. She covers the back, arms, and chest with fanciful designs which are not unpleasant to look at. However, I have more admired the man's patience than the painting itself, for the man sometimes remains standing for twelve hours. [531] Women also draw designs on hammocks and calabashes, but our painters would be likely to question calling these women artists. [89] There is a soot produced by elemi gum being burned under a large pot or some other earthenware vessel. They brush the soot off with a feather. This is the most beautiful black it is possible to find. Boys and girls keep some of it in small calabashes in order to paint themselves with it when they go to feasts. After they have washed well and wiped their faces they dip a small brush in it and draw very delicate lines above their eyelashes and along their eyelids. Others draw Spanish mustaches which they draw twisted on their cheeks in an infinity of scrolls. They also draw a thousand other sketches to prevent their recognition by anyone [416] they meet. They have a special mirror in front of their eyes in order to draw a more amusing and grotesque design. [174] One could scarcely find a Carib who did not have a small mirror for use when he ornaments himself before a feast, and also for use in discovering and pressing the small pimples which come to their faces. [286]

The young girls and boys have a lock of hair on their foreheads. This is cut straight across. Men and women have their forehead and [304] the front part of their head flattened in order to make it more beautiful. If they chanced to be sick in their infancy at the time their head was soft and it could not be shaped in this way, they are supposed to be ugly.

302 soft and it could not be shaped in this way, they are supposed to be ugly. Both men and women let their hair grow long and tie it neatly [301] behind their head when they go out. In their drinking parties they wear long and beautiful feathers of the Aras bird or the Festu en Queue in their hair. They surround these feathers with a very handsome crown of other feathers. [92]

765 They women cut their hair upon the death of their husbands, and husbands cut their hair upon the death of their wives. The children cut their hair upon the death of their father or mother. The hair is [567] cut for the period of a year. The slaves have their hair cut all the time and are never allowed to let their hair grow. [319] They have their hair cut to the neck which means they are in mourning. [458]

301 They climb along a cliff with a small ledge in order to catch the Festu en Queue, so called because it has only one feather at the tail, beautiful and long, which they stick into their hair and of which they are very proud. [88] To bind their hair they use a ribbon or braid which they make themselves with cotton thread and the thorn of a palmetto, which serves as a needle. This ribbon is very strong when it is completed and tied at the end. When it is slack at the end it frays. The ends are decorated with two tufts and over these are two thimbles which decorate and embellish them. [230]

302 A great insult which the women commonly say to their children is "wavy hair," because of the trouble they have when they comb their hair for them. To avoid difficulty they use oils throughout the youth of their children to make the hair thicker and to allow the comb to pass more easily through it. I have seen a mother who took fresh manioc flour with which she covered the head of a child and let it dry and become sticky. I don't know if this helped. [155]

They take a sliver out of a stem of a certain plant which they bend to shave the temples of the head and the eyelashes after having dampened them with manioc water. [366]

301 The ornaments of the men are of caracoli, as well as garters and bracelets of glass beads four fingers wide which they wear on their wrists and at the biceps of the arm. They also wear thimbles, small bells, and necklaces of jaguar teeth. When they catch cats, they never spare them but take their teeth and make smaller necklaces out of them. The women also appreciate green stones, caracoli, and glass beads,

778 it wants to drink and puts it back afterwards. No one may go or dares
825 to go and see it in its cavern unless he has fasted for three days and abstains from his wife. Otherwise he should not be able to see it, or he would be in danger of being bewitched by it, that is to say, killed.

2. Clothing

291 The Caribs go entirely naked without shame, the women as well
301 as the men. I have scolded a captain for this but he only answered:
● [302] "That no good for France, good for Carib." They use urucu [rocou; body paint] to redden their bodies which would otherwise be the color of olives. The women sometimes have a kind of legging which extends from the knee to ankle and which they consider to be fashionable. Men and women wear, when they have them, necklaces of glass beads or crystal, or small, well-matched bones.

There is a man whom we called the Pilot who among them is considered to be one of their foremost captains and is an old friend and loyal to the French. When this man came to visit the governor he
[303] wore a hat on his head as a sign that he was beloved and esteemed by the French. The others were as bare-headed as they were naked.
302 They bound their hair, which was not too long, behind their head, and passed through it feathers of the aras [macaw?], flamingo, and other birds. These feathers hung from behind, and they also fastened in the same place some trinkets in their manner. They had plucked their beards. Arlet, a brother of the Pilot, and himself a captain,
[301] had some small pieces of brass hanging from his lip, chin, and nose.

3. Occupations

562 Women are unhappy and are treated as slaves, for it is required of them to work in the gardens, tend the family duties, and do everything except go to war, fish, or hunt. If there should be large trees to fell the husband will sometimes take the trouble to do it. They
[595] have many wives, whom they take and leave as they wish. They treat them very badly and sometimes kill them, having as a people no justice and no superior authority. Each one does as he wishes and
674 562 is acquitted of the most horrible crimes if he says that he was "drunk

674 as a fly," which is to say very drunk. It is thus understood that he has
562 been well judged. They very often kill the old people saying that they are no longer well and consequently are unhappy. When their wives are old they kill them, arguing as their reason that they are no longer able to tend to the garden or make cassava or ouicou [kind of beer]. They are jealous, and if a woman has failed them they kill her or make her a servant and slave to others. When they have suspicions about her misconduct they make her drunk—for their ouicou is potent when it is well made—and when she is in this state she can conceal nothing.

461 The men are extremely slothful and pass the time lying or sitting on their hammocks, carousing, gossiping, and allowing themselves to
● [309] be combed by their wives. They cannot pass an hour without being combed and don't even take the trouble to fish or hunt, preferring to fast a little and eat only some cassava and crabs, rather than leave the house to catch lizards or tortoises, or some other thing. However,
[439] when they come to trade with the French they catch a tortoise and bring it with them. This is their principal item of trade. They sometimes bring pineapples and bananas as well as bows and arrows which
[572] they give to their comperes; this is the term they use for all their friends.

846 The Caribs have a ridiculous ceremony at the birth of their children. The woman gets up immediately after having given birth and goes back to work if she is able. The husband goes to bed /in a hammock/ which they hang high from the house, and here he complains about his belly and rubs it as if he were suffering greatly. For the span of an entire moon he leaves his hammock only for necessities, supporting himself with a stick. The others visit him as they would a sick man. It is true that to a certain extent they cause this pretended illness to pass into a real one because the man is badly treated. He must fast very rigorously for a few days, and they give him only cassava and very little of that, but they give him enough to drink, especially at the moment the child suckles. After several days he is able to eat crabs, and some time after this he is permitted tortoise meat; finally he eats any kind of food without limitation, as though he were completely healed. But before this they hold an assembly where the so-called sick man is gashed all over his body and loses much blood. Those fathers who have already had five or six children are only gashed
[854] on the arms and legs. They do not know what it is to swaddle children, nor do they treat them delicately as we do; but nevertheless they love them tenderly.

574 carbet to welcome him. They greet him successively with the single word "haleatibou," which means 'welcome.' After this greeting he talks with everyone present and shares the food and drink left over from his meal with them. Then he says goodbye to everyone. They observe this politeness with everyone who visits them while taking a trip. If it is an old man or one well thought of, the women in addition paint him with urucu and grease his head with palmetto oil.

8. Ornaments

302 It is necessary to modify slightly my statement in the first paragraph of this book to the effect that the Caribs don't wear any clothes except the cover given them by nature. Actually they put on a beautiful scarlet suit every day which covers them as completely as their skin. However it does not prevent them from being seen naked. This scarlet garment is a kind of paint they call urucu which is blended with oil and dries up like the oil from flax or nuts. The women may paint the men every day, or when they go to public assemblies. They are always painted before undertaking a journey. The women give them, instead of a white shirt, a close fitting coat of this paint extending from the bottom of the feet to the top of the head. Several make this color more beautiful by adding black paint in the form of long twisted mustaches and circles around their eyes. Sometimes they paint black stripes all over their body. In this way they become as ugly and horrible in fact, as they are beautiful in their own belief.

Our missionaries who wear white habits profit little by wearing a new one among them. These often catch bits of Carib paint which is everywhere because the Caribs leave their mark every place they rub themselves or sit. Concerning this, I recall a Carib captain, newly painted, who had once been rather harshly scolded by Mrs. Aubert, the wife of the governor of this island. He had sat on her bed which was covered with white fustian cloth, and he had left a good part of his leg paint on it. Mr. Aubert invited this Carib to sit at the table for dinner a short time later. This Carib hesitated because he would certainly redden the bench where he should sit. Upon seeing his plate which would be a kind of small stool if it had three legs,

302 he imagined it had been put there to sit upon. For this reason he took it from the table and put it on the bench. Then he sat on it. Realizing that everyone was laughing about it, he became angry and made us understand, indirectly, that he did not know how to behave among the French and would never return to visit us again.

This paint, although light, is useful, for it protects from sunburn and from brine which dries up and burns the skin, and warms them in the cold of the night. The chief benefit is the protection it offers against the mosquitos.

They don't wear a beard but rather pluck it hair by hair with the point of a knife, as I have said. If there is some left they shave it [824] with a grass which cuts like a razor. They all wear long hair like the women of Europe, and let a part of it hang on their forehead. It is cut like that of small girls. They also have strands of hair hanging past their temples. The rest of it is drawn to the back, combed, and adjusted neatly with a cotton string. At the end of this string are [fastened] either small tufts, thimbles, crystal, small white ornaments, or similar trinkets. In this truss of hair they stick feathers of all colors and sometimes make crowns around their heads with them.

304 All of the Caribs have their ears, lower lip, and septum of the
301 nose pierced. They pass long parrot feathers through the nose, which take the place of mustaches. They sometimes suspend from these feathers, small strips of brass as large as a fingernail. They pass hooks through their ear holes and through the holes in their lower lip. They wear long necklaces which hang to their stomachs. These necklaces are usually made with the teeth of agouti, cats, or leopards, and are very neatly strung on cotton cord. They also wear a whistle hung from the neck, made from the bone of an enemy.

301 The ornaments they prize the most are the caracolis or coulloucoli,
439 small strips of a low quality gold metal. It [the metal] has the quality of neither corroding nor tarnishing and this is the reason why the Caribs prize it so highly. Only the captains or their children wear them. It has been thought that these caracolis come from the islands of Hispaniola, otherwise called Santo Domingo. However, the Caribs assert the contrary and say they get them in trade from their enemies whom they call Allouagues. By means of certain agreements which the Caribs have with members of that nation, the caracolis are obtained

301 in exchange for what they receive reciprocally from them. It is
439 difficult to know the place where the Allouagues get them, for they say the gods they worship live among rocks with gushing springs and among inaccessible mountains. It is these gods who give the caracolis to the Allouagues in order to oblige them to bear more honor and reverence to their sovereignty. If these reports are true it might be that the devil abuses their weak, ignorant minds by this device. Whatever the truth may be, these caracolis are very rare among them and they bring them from the continent. There are various sizes of caracolis, but the most valued are not quite as large as the double size of a silver ecu coin. They are crescent shaped. They wear them from their neck embedded in wood.

301 They wear bracelets of white beads as wide as the hand, not at the wrist but at the biceps near the shoulder. They also wear them on their legs in place of garters. They even make five or six double-linked bands of these white glass beads which they wear crossed over their shoulders and under their arms.

302 The hair style of the women is just like that of the men except
301 they don't stick feathers into it, and never wear feather crowns. They place in their hair very nice combs which give the appearance of a crest. They paint themselves with urucu like the men and also wear the same kind of bracelets, not at the biceps, but around the wrist. They wear necklaces of different minerals such as green stone, amber, crystal, and glass beads. I have seen some of them who wore necklaces around their necks weighing more than six pounds. When the women are to appear in the large assemblies they make belts braided from cotton threads and chains of white glass beads, from which they hang in different places small bunches of six or seven links of glass beads as long as the finger. They also wear a large number of small bells in order to make more noise when they dance.

301 All the girls and women, except the slaves, wear a kind of legging from earliest childhood. These extend from ankle to calf. A second legging of four fingers width is worn between calf and knee. At the top of the lower legging they fasten a circular ornamentation, larger than a plate, woven of reed and cotton. A smaller one is worn on the lower legging edge. These two circular ornaments cause the calf to be so full that it looks like an Edam cheese between

764 them. They busied themselves reconditioning the house so thoroughly that it appeared new. They buried this child with the following ceremonies: In the midst of the house they dug a round hole three to four feet deep in which they placed the neatly prepared child. He was wrapped in his cotton hammock in the following position: he was sitting up on his heals, both elbows on his knees, with his head supported by the palms of his hands. The women surrounded the grave, taking the same position as the child, and began to make strange sighs. Immediately after they began a chant, very sad and full of laments. This song was intermingled with sighs and often with loud screams during which they raised their eyes to the sky. They shed such a quantity of tears that they would have compelled the most stout-hearted individuals to weep with them. Their husbands were sitting behind them, weeping like the women, but solaced their wives by embracing them with one hand and rubbing their arm occasionally with the other. One man covered the hole with a piece of plank and the women threw some earth on it from time to time. After this ceremony, which lasted a good hour, the women burned on the grave all of the child's possessions—consisting of certain small baskets, spun cotton, and some small trinkets.

764 When the head of the family dies his wives and children cut their
● [302] hair, wearing it as short as the slaves do, for one full year. They fast for the period of one moon on bread and water. It is not because they believe these actions are useful to the deceased, but rather they say, if they did not fast at the death of one of their relatives their own eyesight would weaken, they would become infirm, and would fall into the hands of their enemies. If the deceased owned slaves his relatives kill them unless they have already fled, in which case they are not pursued.

Relatives who cannot be present at the funeral come afterwards to visit the grave. They are obliged to weep like the others, although very often they don't feel like it. They sometimes spend a good quarter of an hour sighing, lamenting, and grimacing, before they shed tears. But when they are weeping no one can stop them.

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

342 Men slept in this structure; they and the boys ate, worked, and passed the time of day there. Women, however, entered only to serve the men.

Women's houses were each about half the size of the carbet. Their construction was the same, except that each had only a single doorway and was provided with a reed partition separating the room where the women and children slept from the kitchen.

The storage platforms were built on piles and roofed, but open on the sides.

352 **Household furniture.**—Mats were used to cover the doorways of the houses. Within, hammocks were the chief articles of furniture (pl. 93). Made of a network of cotton thread, they were 6 feet (1.8 m.) long and 12 feet (3.6 m.) wide. The ends were tied by cords to two posts in the wall of the dwelling; often the cords extended along the sides of the hammock as decoration. Some hammocks were painted red or black. They had a small packet of ash at each end, which was believed to make them last longer. Small wooden tables and stools were used in many houses; some had cabinets in which to store weapons and utensils. The rafters also were a favorite storage place.

[484] When on canoe trips the *Carib* made temporary shelters by erecting posts, to which they attached hammocks, covering them with a roof of palm leaves.

DRESS AND ADORNMENT

291 **Clothing, hairdress, and toilet.**—Like the *Arawak*, the *Carib* had no clothing except for a small cotton apron worn by women over their genitals (pl. 93). In historic times this was ornamented with beads. Every
382 morning men washed themselves and sat in the carbet while the women combed their hair, anointing it with oil, and painted their bodies red. The women then dressed themselves in the same manner. The paint, urucú (roucou), was made by mixing oil with boiled and ground seeds from the bixa plant. It was brushed over the whole body, partially for decoration and partially as a protection against insects. On ceremonial occasions men also used black paint made from genipa; they had their wives paint it in streaks over their faces and bodies, using tiny hair brushes.

[382] Rich black hair was considered a sign of beauty. Both men and women wore it long, cutting only the part above the eyes. They let it hang free or sometimes bunched part of it on the back of the head, tying it with a cotton cord and decorating it with tail feathers of the macaw (arara). Only slaves had their hair cut short in the *Arawak* manner. Men plucked their beards, which they considered a deformity.

304 **Deformation and scarification.**—A mother flattened both the forehead and the back of her child's head. The *Carib* pierced the ears, nasal septa, and lower lip for the insertion of fishbones, feathers, stone pendants, or pieces of wood, stone, or shell. They used the latter only temporarily,

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

237 once imported but now found in a wild state, makes a typical comb (locally called "casnava") whose wax, at first yellow, becomes quite white on boiling and straining. Left to itself, it soon becomes hard. On the other hand, the native stingless bee (sometimes called "pou lélé"), small and dark of color, makes a sort of pouch about a foot long, interiorly divided into pockets, in lieu of comb. The wax is brown-black and remains perfectly malleable, however long it is kept. For this reason it is often used for molding figurines, etc. The honey itself is liquid, very slightly viscous, of a clear brown hue, and has a fragrant subacid taste (miel stir).

314 Two kinds of oil are commonly made and used in the reserve today. Carapate oil, so-called, is nothing more than the oil of the palma Christi, castor oil, one or two of which shrubs grow near every house. The berries are gathered when ripe and stored until required in baskets or calabashes in the kitchen. When oil is wanted they are roasted, pounded in a mortar, and the resulting paste boiled, whereupon the oil rises to the surface and is skimmed off. The women make this [302] oil and use it for anointing their hair. The *Carapa guianensis*, from which oil used to be made, still grows in the woods of Dominica, but is used today only for its wood.

237 Shark oil, made by the men, is used in cruses for interior lighting. [372 Boiled together with copal gum and mixed with dry plaintain straw, it 501] serves in the calking of canoes.

Turtle oil is known to have been made and used for cooking, but owing to the present rarity of this animal and the laws made for its preservation is seldom met with today.

314 Coconut oil is occasionally made for sale but is never put to any domestic use in Carib households.

Manni (*Mavronides coccinea*?) is the name given to a blackish resinous substance used by the Caribs for strengthening the *Bromelia* twine with which they bind their baskets. I have seen lumps of it as big as a man's fist in the homes of basket makers. It is interesting to note that the tree from which this resin comes is not found in Dominica, nor, as far as I know, in the neighboring islands. The Caribs seek and gather their supply on the beach, where the ocean currents deposit it at certain times of the year, chiefly in February and March.

366 Pigments are singularly ignored nowadays. Roucou (*Bixa orellana*) still grows near many of the houses, but as the wearing of clothes has become general since the introduction of Christianity, its use as a skin protection against sun and insects has been forgotten. It is at present used occasionally as a decorative coloring matter in the home, but the present-day Caribs do not know of any fixative medium. Formerly it was used, mixed with oil of carapa, as a body paint, and the bright red pigment obtained by rubbing between the palms of the hands the ripe seeds contained in a half-opened pod.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13

in shape they are robust, well-formed, with
small hands and feet, in color decidedly light, and some even fair, their complexion being of a yellowish cast. They make canoes and woven baskets, after the manner of the aborigines, are skilled fishers and sometimes hunters, and are altogether trusty and superior in many respects to the blacks.

Several writers have described the Caribs during various periods in their history since coming into notice, but I will select from them one who wrote about two hundred years ago, whose pages bear every evidence of honesty and authenticity. At that time the English were mainly in possession of the islands. He says: "They go stark naked, both men and women; though the Christians have conversed very much amongst them, yet have all their persuasions to induce them to cover themselves been to no purpose. . . . They change their natural color by dyeing their bodies with roucou, which makes them red all over. . . . They also adorn the crown of the head with a little hat made of bird's feathers of different colors. . . . They bore their ears, nose, lips, for the insertion of ornaments. . . . About their necks they wear necklaces made of the bones of their enemies, teeth of agoutis, etc. . . . On great occasions, they wear scarfs and girdles of feathers. . . . Their most valued ornaments were gorgets of copper, obtained from the Arrowaks by plunder, crescent-shaped and shining, and these are, most frequently, the only possessions they leave their children at death. . . . They wear cotton cloth and can dye it in various colors, chiefly red; they had hammocks when found by Columbus. . . . They made fine pottery, which they baked in kilns, and also wove fine baskets. . . . They cultivated their land in common. . . . They buried the corpse of a chief, or head of a family, in the centre of his own dwelling. . . . Their heaven seems to have been a sort of Mohammedan paradise of houris and harems for the brave. . . . They raised rustic altars, placing upon them fruits and flowers. . . . The Caribs have

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13

The Caribs have an ancient and natural language, such as is peculiar to them, and also a bastard speech, with foreign words, chiefly Spanish, intermixed. Among themselves they always use the natural language, in conversing with Christians the bastard speech. . . . The women also have a different speech from the men. . . . It hath been observed that the men are less amorous than the women; both are naturally chaste; and when those of other nations look even earnestly at them, and laugh at their nakedness, they were wont to say to them, 'you are to look on us only between both the eyes.' . . . Yet, it must be confessed that some have degenerated from that chastity, and many other virtues of their ancestors, the Europeans having taught them many vices,—to the perpetual infamy of the Christian name. . . . They are great lovers of cleanliness, bathing every day; are generous, hospitable and honest. . . . It is also a manifest truth, confirmed by daily experience in America, that the holy sacrament of baptism being conferred on these savages, the devil never beats or torments them afterwards as long as they live.[1]

"The Carib boys were compelled to pierce their food suspended from a tree with an arrow, before they could eat it. . . . They are said to have used poisoned arrows, dipping them in what must have been the urrari poison, obtained from Guiana. . . . Like many natives, they eradicated the beard and the hair on other parts of the body. . . . They compressed the skulls of new-born infants; and a hatred of the Arrowaks was instilled. . . . Their cabins were built of poles fixed circularly in the ground and drawn together at the top, covered with palm leaves, and in the centre of each village was a building larger than the others for public assemblage.

"The Caribbeans are a handsome, well-shaped people, of a smiling countenance, middle stature, having broad shoulders

[1] See Davies's "History of the Caribby Islands." London, 1666.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13

the Caribbees," so that I will not further quote, than to point out that he says:

"The difference in the language of the two sexes is more striking among the people of the Carib race than among any other American nations. The pride of the Caribs led them to withdraw themselves from every other tribe, even from those with whom, by their language, they have affinity." It may be added, however, that this difference of language as between the sexes, among the Caribs, was supposed to have its origin in the fact that the women were of the Arawak tribes, captured by the Caribs, while the males were killed. "Among the true Caribs," says Im Thurm, "a two-inch broad band of cotton is knitted round each ankle, and just below the knee of every young female child, and this band is never removed during life, or if removed, is immediately replaced. The consequence is that the muscles of the calf swell out to an abnormal degree between these bands," etc. This peculiarity, of the swollen calf, was noticed among the Caribs by the first discoverers, in 1493. "Every man wears a long strip of cloth between the legs and fastened to a belt, and the women a short apron, tied by strings around the waist. This apron is usually made of beads or of bright-colored seeds, in conventional patterns . . . The men also wear a necklace of white and shining peccary teeth, as well as an armlet . . . They paint their bodies and pull out all hairs not on the scalp. . . . For staining their skins and hammocks, the men use *furoah*,—the deep red pulp around the seeds of the anatto (*Bixa orellana*),—as when first discovered. As ornaments, the true Caribs wear crescent-shaped nose-pieces and ear-distenders, as well as lip ornaments, crowns of feathers, feather ruffs, and short mantles of woven cotton ornamented with feathers. The women are less given to ornament, except that they wear great girdles of beads and bright seeds, etc.; and as a tribe, they are not prone to wear European clothing, save as single garments, occasionally, and beads. . . .

mountains surround narrow ravines, where spring water trickles. The country is almost entirely wooded; it is virgin forest in all its vigor, and the most varied species grow there side by side; the imposing silk-cotton tree, Eriodendron anfractuosum, the large-leaved chestnut tree, Sloanea massoni, the logwood tree, Haematoxylon campecheanum, the mahogany tree, Swietenia mahogany, the anarta-tree, Bixa orellana mingle with palms of all sorts, gigantic bamboos and a multitude of arborescent ferns. All these trees are interlaced with endless lianas, and in their midst, giant like, rise splendid gum-trees, Dacryodes hexandra, from whose trunks one can cut an entire canoe. The district is crossed, at some distance from the coast, by a road which is well-defined but not practicable for carriages, which is part of the road which makes a complete circuit of the island. In the part which crosses the Carib territory, one /135/ finds a few paved sections, which date from the French occupation. The climate is humid and it rains frequently, even during the dry season. The temperature varies between 25° and 32° C., but the ocean breeze moderates the heat at all times and in the mountains there is always a certain freshness.

This part of Dominica is today inhabited by about a hundred Caribs of pure stock and about 400 mestizos, who have some black blood.

The Carib is of medium height, but has fine muscles and is strong; the women are noticeably smaller than the men. Their eyes are black, comparatively small and somewhat set back, the cheek-bones prominent, the teeth white and well-set, the hair black, straight, shiny, quite long, but generally cut amongst the men; the latter are usually beardless, although some have, nevertheless, a short moustache. The skin is quite light or tends to be somewhat brown, but it is no darker than that of Europeans who live in the open in regions where the sun is very hot. Formerly the Caribs were completely naked and it was their custom to completely stain their bodies red with roucou (1) diluted /136/ with carapat oil, which protected them against insect bites,

1. Roucou or rocou, from the word urucu used by the natives of Brazil, is the word for the grains of the roucou tree, from which they extract a red dye. The roucou tree, a shrub of 4 to 5 meters in height, is very common in the Antilles.

against insect bites, but which gave them the appearance, as many travellers reported, of a boiled crayfish. Later their dress consisted, for both sexes, of a cord passed around the body, holding a loin-cloth smaller than a pocket-handkerchief. The men and the young boys always wore a sharpened knife between the cord and the thigh. Today the surviving Caribs lack picturesqueness; in contact with the white and black creoles, they have taken over their clothing. The men wear trousers and a shirt; the women wear a long dress of a light color, similar to those in which the negresses dress. Like the latter, their heads are covered with a madras kerchief. Only the children of both sexes go about clothed in a short shirt or completely naked. Formerly it was the custom, shortly after birth, to deform their heads by flattening the skulls by means of a small board.

The Carib women do not actually seem very coquettish, and wear few ornaments, though at the time when the roucou was their only piece of clothing, they did not neglect ornaments; they adorned themselves with necklaces, and bracelets, and at adolescence they wove for themselves a kind of legging which they wore around the leg between the calf and the ankle, and which they never took off. Even the men adorned themselves, on important occasions, with metal ornaments called caracoli, which they wore in their ears, nostrils, lower lips, and on the chest, not to speak of the black stripes which they sometimes painted on their faces and bodies or the multicolored plumes with which they adorned themselves.

The Caribs are not very expausive and melancholy is the basis of their character; their faces bear the mark of sadness and disdain. They are vindictive, and never forget their injuries, and are particularly formidable when they are under the influence of alcoholic drinks (1), for which they have a great weakness. Cherishing their

1. Before the Europeans brought alcohol to them, they made themselves a fermented beverage, called ouycou.

independence above all, servitude is distasteful to them and they do not wish to lose their liberty at any price. /137/ Merciless toward their enemies, they are kind and generous to their friends and are very cordial in the exercise of hospitality. Of an unconcerned disposition, the men spend entire days in doing nothing, asleep in their

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

between father and daughter, brother and sister, and of mother and daughter with the same man; "but the others hated them because of it." Of polygyny, the latter author wrote:

> It is a fact that some of the savages have several wives; yet nevertheless many women are without husbands, because the majority have only one wife, though there are a few who have two in one or two carbets. It happens quite often (when they are in another island where they have not brought their mistresses) that they get themselves new ones for the time of their stay only. I have never seen two women together, eating or sleeping with a Savage, nor travelling together with him in the same canoe. They have their turn, month and month about, even when pregnant. After giving birth they are a good while without seeing them for fear of harming the child.

However, it was not unknown for a wife to remain without seeing her husband for a whole year; and we are told of one case where the neglected woman's father, a chief, sent to warn his son-in-law that unless he put in a speedy appearance, he would find his wife bestowed upon another. Du Tertre, La Borde,[4] and Labat (though not Breton) mention the sororate. "If a husband shows himself worthy," says the latter, "or should his wife grow ill or old, the father-in-law will reward him by presenting him with the younger sister of his wife."

The old records mention no marriage ceremony other than that which consisted in the bride's serving the groom with food, and then eating with him. Then their hammocks would be slung next to one another; and the following day, the bride would comb her husband's hair and smear him with oil and roku (*Bixa orellana*). No women-folk except a man's own wife might eat with him, says Breton; while according to Labat (and present-day usage) not even wives ate with their husbands.

The bridegroom—unless he were a chief or a chief's son—took up his abode with his wife's family, and contributed as best he could to their common weal. Every married woman had her own fire for cooking, however; and every couple its own müyn9, to sleep in, as well as the use of the communal tábuy or longhouse, which was divided into men's and women's halves. As has been seen above, if a man had more than one wife, he was expected to divide his time and services between their respective carbets.

Newly married couples were supposed to avoid (for how long we are not told) parents-in-law and siblings-in-law. Nor should they visit sick people, as this might hinder their recovery. According to Rochefort[5] (and present-day

4 (R. P.) de La Borde, *Recueil de divers voyages* (Paris, 1674).

5 César de Rochefort, *Histoire naturelle et morale des Antilles de l' Amérique* (Rotterdam, 1665) [also attributed to de Poincy].

785 they liked for a further period of two or three months, and thereafter only continued to abstain from certain activities and meats for some time.

852 When the child began to be given fish to eat at about the age of two years, its hair was cut for the first time ceremonially, and its mother's temples shaved. [302] The piercing of its ears, etc., apparently also took place at this ceremony [307] (nikulukáyanų, nùbukaétių) which, according to Breton's description, was held concurrently with an elétuak festival.

796 The latter appears to have been a family rather than a tribal affair, although [851] intended for the carrying out of all the *rites de passage*, such as initiation of in- [831] fants (into the tribe) and adolescents (into manhood), and for the purification 783 and reintegration of those who had for the first time become parents or had killed an enemy.

> Il y a peu de Sauvages qui ayent femmes et enfans, qui ne fassent ce festin icy, qui est un de leurs plus solemnels: ils sont quelque fois des quatre mois à s'y préparer, on y rase le poil des tempes aux femmes, et à leur petits enfans ausquels on commence d'y faire manager du poisson.

Besides large quantities of wiku to be prepared for the feathered dancers (eletuakátių táomáliti) and guests, basketry tables (matútu) and other utensils [273] for the rites must be made, and those asked to help by making them (itawánə-muku) repaid for their trouble by a special drinking-party (itehwennə). Moreover, after the elétuak festival all such articles were held to be fair plunder for the guests.

796 The name, elétuak, appears to connote *a putting out from* or *forth-putting*, 304 (cf. éleletuába *incise! let [blood]!* < éle *power, strength;* and as a stem: *choose, extend, endure:* élele *speech* or *flame;* átu[ra] *[to]put forth);* and the essential part of the rites performed on these occasions consisted in blood-letting.[6] Breton goes on to describe them thus:

> . . . les grands, voire les mariez apportent quand et eux des oyseaux de rapine, les petits des petits, les mariez des gros et grands qu'ils ont pris dans le nid et nourris pour ce mystère. Le capitaine qui est prié pour cela prend les oyseaux et leur casse la teste sur leurs testes qui en restent ensanglantées. Il incise les petits et les grands, mène les petits dans leurs lits qui y doivent demeurer sans manger, et en la posture qu'il leur donne, sans laquelle ils croyent qu'ils demeureroient bossus ou contrefais, 796 suivant celle qu'ils prendroient dans ce lit [i. e. hammock]. On écrase les oyseaux 301 des grands (s'ils ont eu enfant, ou s'ils ont tué quelque Arrouague) avec quantité de gros grains de poivre [*Capsicum*], ou pimant [< Carib, boémiwę *Capsicum* <

[777] [757]

6 Hunters still make razor cuts in their arms to improve their luck, while incision and cupping are practised to relieve pain.

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
ST13 Callinago ST13

weaving of hammocks on a heavy frame, similar to that employed in Guiana today, and which leaned against the wall of the house. He says:

> The Savages cut four big, round, smooth pieces of wood; two of which they lean and secure against the house-runners, while the two others are bound tightly across them, one above and one below, in proportion to the size of the bed, and around which the women arrange their cotton thread, which they handle skillfully, but without hurrying themselves over it. They leave half a foot unwoven at both extremities, and this they divide into little bundles, through which they attach a little cord called ebenebu, then bend it back at arm's length and pass it through another bundle, bend it again, and so on to the last bundle. Then they pass a stouter cord through the upper bends of the smaller cord, and this is the one by which they hang it wherever they may be to protect themselves from snakes and ants and other harmful beasts.[31]

Labat describes Carib hammocks seen some fifty years later as "une pièce de grosse toile de coton"; and goes on to say how, once the warp was set up, the women were

> obliged to pass their ball of thread under and over the warp threads, one after another, and to beat the weft down with a sort of knife made of heavy hard wood so as to make all the threads get into their places and render the work even.

From the above it would appear that heddles were not in general use; but la Borde speaks of a "roller" at the bottom of the frame, which the women turned as the weaving progressed, and states explicitly that the ends of the warp threads were left unwoven, and were not cut on completion of the hammock. From the above descriptions, as well as from modern Guiana practice, it is evident that this referred, *not* to a cloth-beam, but to a head-stick, which must have been employed, as otherwise the hammock would have had to be cut on completion, and there would have been no bundles of loops through which to pass the "little cord."

"The paint, urucú (roucou), was made by mixing oil with boiled and ground seeds from the bixa plant."[32] *Bixa orellana* L., Carib: kuséue, in the men's, and: bĭše, in the women's speech, is a small tree. The dye is obtained from the waxy red aril surrounding each of the seeds, which are clustered in a sort of pod. After boiling, according to Breton, the water was allowed to cool and the seeds rubbed between the hands to remove this aril, which then settled at the bottom of the water in the form of a waxlike cake. The prepared paint, known as ǰurúkuli or

31 Breton, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-193.
32 *Handbook*, p. 552.

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
ST13 Callinago ST13

urukámbui, "closes the pores, prevents the seawater from drying on their skins, keeps off mosquitoes, and kills chigoes."[33]

Carib basketry was and still is made from *Ischnosiphon arouma* (Aublet) Koernicke, the "ouallómian" of Breton's or the uarúmā of our own time and spelling, and not, as Rouse says, from "Latania" (presumably an anglicization of French latanier, from Carib alátani, which is the small fan-palm, *Coccothrinax martinicensis* Beccari), whose leaves served as thatching and for making rough sunshades, umbrellas, bags, etc., but could not possibly be employed in the typical wicker pattern and twilled basketry of the Carib. As in Breton's time, so today Carib baskets have a double wall and cover like those of the Taino described by Rouse,[34] but such baskets are and may be rendered waterproof only by the insertion of one or more intermediary layers of leaves. The *Mytilus edulis* is not found in the Lesser Antilles today, and it seems probable that the "mussel" whose shells were used, according to Rouse,[35] in scraping strands employed for basketry, refers to some other species.

Although it may not be possible, as Rouse says, to substantiate Gower's statement that descent was matrilineal among the Island Carib, this feature is at least implicit in the kinship terminology.

Breton is in disagreement with Rouse's authorities on several points concerning the life cycle. Of a husband's relations with his wives, he says:

> they [the wives] have their turn month and month about, even when they are pregnant; after childbirth they [the husbands] remain without seeing them for a good while, for fear of harming the child.[36]

In seeming contradiction, Rouse says that sexual intercourse was forbidden during pregnancy, and does not mention post-puerperal abstinence.[37] The solution may perhaps be found in the attitude of the modern Carib father, who says that while abstinence during pregnancy is a matter of taste, intercourse during the forty-day period following birth would be injurious to the child. Rouse notes that the accounts of the couvade vary considerably, his own being "taken largely from Davies, with supplemental data from La Borde:" "For several days after birth the mother fasted, eating only dried cassava and drinking warm water. The father, on the other hand, practiced the couvade. Immediately after the birth he com-

33 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
34 *Handbook*, p. 527.
35 *Handbook*, p. 554.
36 Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 278.
37 *Handbook*, p. 557.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Eleusine indica (Linnaeus) Gaertner, Fruct. & Sem. 1 : 8. 1788. 824[Y]
Fowl's Foot, Pied Poule.

A weedy grass native to India but widely distributed in the tropical and warm temperate regions of both hemispheres.

Caribs crush the plant with salt and apply it as a poultice [752] to sprains and dislocations.

Specimen citation: 185, 2462, 3620.

Gynerium sagittatum (Aublet) Beauvois, Ess. Agrost. 138. t. 24. f. 1812.

Arundo saccharoides Poiret in Lam. Encycl. Sup. 4 : 703. 1816. Arrow, Wild Cane. — Roseau. — *buléus* (m) (« arrow », « pierce »), *mabélu, mabéru.*[6]

This tall reed is found throughout tropical America where it is widely used as laths in light construction work. It is to be seen in Dominica chiefly along stream-banks where it often forms colonies in full sunlight. The grass is grown by the Barama River Caribs of Guiana under the name *mapuru epui*. From the stems they fashion shafts for arrows.

For plaiting bands subsequently sewn together by the Dominica [285] Caribs to make hats, the midrib of the leaf is peeled, bleached by laying it in the dew, and sun-dried. The young main-stem, prepared in the same manner as that of *Ischnosiphon arouma*, is used for weaving small decorative baskets (either alone or in conjunction with split stems of *Ischnosiphon arouma*), fans, mats, etc.; while more mature stems are chosen for edging and reinforcing the corners of Carib baskets. Mature inflorescence stems are [411] very straight and were used formerly for arrows as they are by lowland Indians even today in other parts of Latin America. The 824[X] « heart » (i. e. the young shoot of unopened leaves) of this species 302 is used as a shampoo when washing the hair (as are the small

---

[6] Breton (7) lists three aboriginal names for « roseau ». All probably apply to *Gynerium sagittatum* but we are certain only of *buléus*, which he records: « ... it produces its flower at the top, and bears a ' panache ' (plume) which when detached leaves a perfectly straight rod ». He states, further, that [417 285] laths and palisading (wattlework) are made from the stems of the roseau called *mabélu*, and baskets from that called *likaket*. All these uses are still known to the Carib with reference to the ordinary roseau described above.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

824 abortive fruits of *Theobroma cacao*, z'herbes balié, and the like) to promote a luxuriant growth. The fanlike blades or « heads » are used for thatch and the stems as thatching rods, screens, and lattice doorways. The ashes of burnt leaves are mixed with the sap from stems of balisier (*Heliconia* spp.) and juicy pulp of the genip (*Genipa americana*), and then are rubbed on the bodies of those suffering from yaws (*framboesia*).

Specimen citation: 3197.

Paspalum laxum Lamarck, Tabl. Encycl. 1: 176. 1791.

Paspalum glabrum Poiret in Lam. Encycl. 5: 30. 1804.

Chien-Dent.

This is a common coastal grass to be found in sandy or rocky soils throughout the West Indies.

Caribs place the whole plant in water which is then given as a drink to infants in order to hasten teething.

Specimen citation: 3309.

Saccharum officinarum Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 54. 1753.

kánise (from Spanish *caña*).

A native of southeast Asia cultivated in the tropics and subtropics of both hemispheres.

The growing of sugarcane was initiated in the West Indies early in the sixteenth century and the plant is now the most important product of many of the islands. Although unimportant in Dominica sufficient cane is grown to supply local demands.

Patches of sugarcane are to be found in the Carib Reserve and nearly every hut has in its surrounding yard a primitive single-post-and-lever-type of cane press with which to express the « vesou » or juice. The latter is used in place of refined sugar in cocoa, coffee, and for general cooking.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

Vetiveria zizanioides (Linnaeus) Nash in Small, Fl. Southeast. U. S. 67. 1903.

Vetiveria arundinacea Grisebach, Fl. Br. W. I. 559. 1864.

Andropogon zizanioides Urban, Symb. Ant. 4: 79. 1903.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

302 ●
142
[291]

Fig. 6 – Contemporary Carib types from Dominica (Reproduced from sketches by Hester Marwin). [opposite p. 530]

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

BURSERACEAE. GUMBO-LIMBO FAMILY.

K824 **Bursera simaruba** (Linnaeus) Sargent, Gard. & Forest 3: 260. 1890.

Bursera gummifera Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. ed. 2: 471. 1762.

Elaphrium simaruba Rose in No. Am. Fl. 25: 246. 1911.

Gumbo-Limbo, West Indian Birch, Turpentine Tree, Gum Tree. — Gommier Rouge.

This conspicuous tree is widespread in the West Indies, also in the continental American tropics, particularly in dry thickets at lower elevations.

In the Greater Antilles gumbo-limbo is frequently planted as a roadside shade tree.

[752] The Caribs apply the fragrant gum of gommier rouge locally as a plaster for contusion or internal injury. Because cut posts [417] readily take root and grow, the tree is also used to construct « live » fences.

Specimen citation: 3146.

Dacryodes excelsa Vahl, Skr. Nat. Selsk. 6: 117. 1810.

Dacryodes hexandra Grisebach, Fl. Br. W. I. 174. 1859.

Gommier. — *sibu* (« support, buttress »).

A tall columnar tree found in the Antilles from Puerto Rico to Grenada. In Dominica's mountain rain forests the gommier is one of the dominant species.

Throughout the Caribbee isles the straight trunks of this species have been much used in the construction of dugout canoes.

A white fragrant resinous gum (known to the Caribs as *kurukai*), [314] « gum elemi » exudes freely from any incision made on the slaty gray trunks of gommier rees. The material hardens in the air so the gum can be readily scraped off and put to a number of uses. [302] BRETON (7) records that it served as an unguent used by the youths and maidens on feast days. It is employed to light fires [373] and to make torches [with the wick of pounded bois diable wood (*Licania ternatensis*), tree fern caudex (*Cyathea arborea*), or z'icaque wood (*Chrysobalanus icaco*)]. Boiled together with shark oil [396] and mixed with cotton-lint, maho fiber (*Guatteria*, *Hibiscus*, etc.),

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

or plantain straw (*Musa*), it is used to calk canoes. When burnt the gum produces a fine black soot, called by the Caribs *kuina*, which was formerly mixed with oil to form a black paint for coloring strands of larouman (*Ischnosiphon arouma*) or for drawing decorative lines on the face or body. The gum serves as a masticatory said to allay shortness of breath, and is also applied to an aching or hollow tooth.

Present day Carib craftsmen fashion their dugout canoes from the straight trunks of the gommier [31]. A selected tree is felled, hollowed and shaped with axe and adze, and then opened — a widening process affected by applying weights (usually stones) within and gentle heat from low fires built along both sides of the trunk. Planks, usually hewn from gommier, are then added to the gunwales thus raising the sides. Cassava troughs and wooden kitchen mortars are constructed from the trunks of smaller gommier trees.

Specimen citation: 653, 2969.

MELIACEAE. Mahogany Family.

Carapa guianensis Aublet, Pl. Guian. 2. Suppl. 32. 1775. Acajou. — Bois Carapat, Carapate (from the Carib word, *karapa*, meaning « oil »). — *kuáho*.

A large tree reported in the Lesser Antilles from Guadeloupe to Trinidad and also native to tropical South America. According to Williams and Cheesman (67) the reddish wood is suitable for general construction purposes and the oil from the seeds is useful

[31] In the time of Breton and Labat such dugouts were sometimes constructed from a tree known as red cedar (acajou rouge). Breton (7) writes: « The French call it acajou rouge... shingles are made of it to cover the houses... the savages make their canoes of it, and joiners what they please. Moreover it smells very good; its seed might well be used to make oil ». Unfortunately at least two species in Dominica are known today as acajou, and each possesses a fragrant wood. Only one of these, *Cedrela odorata* L., goes under the Creole name of acajou rouge. Although the characteristics of acajou rouge fulfill somewhat Father Breton's description, the other acajou, *Carapa guianensis*, is the only tree known to the Caribs of the Reserve under this name. Furthermore, the seeds of *Carapa guianensis* were formerly utilized by Caribs in making carapa oil; the samara-like ones of *Cedrela* scarcely fulfill Breton's description.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

medicinally, as an insect repellant, for burning, and for soap and candle manufacture.

Carapate is a source of local timber, but to the present day Carib it is known principally as a « hunter's tree » because its fruit is much sought out by game birds. In the past the wood was used for canoes (see footnote [21]). Formerly an oil, much used both as a hair dressing and an insect-repelling constituent of *roku* (*Bixa orellana*) body paint, was made from the seeds; but castor oil from the seeds of *Ricinus communis* has now replaced it.

Specimen citation: 128 (T), 145 (T).

MALPHIGIACEAE. Malphigia Family.

Banisteria longifolia Swartz, Prodr. 75. 1788.
Heteropteris platyptera DeCandolle, Prodr. 1: 592. 1824.
Corde Caco, Cercle Caco, Sec Caco.

A woody liana of the Lesser Antilles.

The stout stems of corde caco are employed by the Caribs as binding edging for cassava sifters, shoulder carry-alls, tambours basques, and mats.

Specimen citation: 3167, 3270.

Byrsonima spicata (Cavendish) DeCandolle, Prodr. 1: 580. 1824.
Bois Tan [22], Moricypre, Moricypre Blanc (6). — *murti*, *mulei*.

This tree is common in moist forests throughout the West Indies and continental tropical America.

The even-grained timber of bois tan is used for posts and elsewhere on the island for furniture. The fruits are edible and are much sought after by game birds hence bois tan is known as a « hunter's tree ». As its vernacular name implies, there is contained in the bark a tannin which is sometimes used locally for preparing hides. When the Carib hunter desires to hunt agouti (*Dasyprocta* sp.) he first washes his dog (and sometimes himself) with a potion or « chance » made by macerating the bark of bois

[22] Not to be confused with another tree, *Picramnia pentandra*, also called « tan », and also utilized by the Caribs.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

1824 **Richeria grandis** Vahl, Eclog. 1: 30. 1796.
Bois Bandé.

This large tree, common in the montane rain-forests of Dominica, ranges from Montserrat to Trinidad.

[314 632 224] The timber of bois bandé is widely used by the Caribs for boards, while a decoction of the bark is reputed to be an aphrodisiac. Hunters are careful not to cut or slash at this particular species when setting out for the chase for they believe any injury to such trees would cause their hunting to be unsuccessful.

Specimen citation: 567, 1318, 1895.

Ricinus communis Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1007. 1753.
Castor-Bean. — Carapate (from the Carib word, *karapa*, meaning « oil »). — *lamáho* (w), *sulúanũ* (m).

A native of the Old World, much cultivated and spontaneous in the West Indies and continental tropical and subtropical America.

The Castor Bean is planted in every Carib dooryard and is known as carapate (the name more correctly applied to *Carapa guianensis*). [302] Ricinus oil is now substituted for the oil of *Carapa guianensis* for hair dressing. Formerly castor oil was possibly mixed (in place of the oil of *Carapa*) with bíset pigment (*Bixa orellana*) to form body paint. The leaves of the Castor Bean are [278 752 846] heated and used both as a compress for internal pains and for massaging the spleen. A special blended purgative tea given after parturition uses castor oil as an ingredient (see *Jatropha* spp.); while another tea, a « cure » for gonorrhea, includes the seeds of this plant (see *Solanum torvum*).

Specimen citation: 570.

Sapium caribaeum Urban, Symb. Ant. 3: 308. 1902.
La Glu, Lagli. — *vélekene*.

This tree is a native of the higher volcanic islands of the Lesser Antilles, and is recorded from Guadeloupe to St. Vincent. In Dominica it occurs chiefly at middle elevations although on the wetter windward side it approaches the coast.

The white sap of this species makes the best bird-lime utilized [223] by the Carib. The lime is obtained by making incisions on the

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Formerly pimout

[814] was added instead of sugar. Small abortive pods (i. e. those which [263] turn yellow instead of maturing) are used as a constituent of a shampoo which supposedly promotes growth of the hair. The [302 534 372] wood is utilized in the construction of frames for drums (tambour basque), and was formerly used for fire drills.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

DILLENIACEAE. Dillenia Family.

Doliocarpus calinoides (Eichler) Gilg in Engl. & Prantl, Nat. Pfl. 3: 114. 1893.

Corde d'l'Eau.

A stout liana inhabiting the mountain forests of Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe, Dominica, and Trinidad.

[272] This vine contains a pint or more of refreshing water which, on cutting the stem, is released and drunk by the Caribs. The species is rather rare and is known chiefly to hunters who say that one must sever the liana with one stroke else the water will mount up the cord.

Specimen citation: 37 (T).

GUTTIFERAE. Clusia Family.

Calophyllum brasiliense Camb. var. **antillanum** (Britt.) Standley, Tropical Woods 30: 7. 1932.

Calophyllum antillanum Britton in Britton & Wilson, Bot. Porto Rico (Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virg. Isls. 5). 584. 1924.

Calophyllum calaba sensu Grisebach, Fl. Br. W. I. 108. 1859, as to Dominica citation.

Calaba, Galba, Maria, Santa Maria.

A West Indian tree found in Dominica at lower elevations.

This species is valued throughout the Antilles as a source of timber. Some of the big canoes of the Tainos of Cuba and Hispaniola were constructed from the wood of this tree.

[313] The hard, durable, reddish brown wood of galba is used by Carib (and Creole) for posts, furniture, and general construction purposes.

Specimen citation: 3199.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Annatto, a native shrub of South America, is widespread on the islands and continent of tropical America. In Dominica it is commonly grown as an ornamental but is also spontaneous at lower and middle elevations.

A vegetable dye, obtained from the waxy red aril surrounding each seed has had extensive usage. Today it is employed to color butter, cheese, oleomargarines, and (in Germany) even white wines. YBARRA states that in Jamaica it is supposed to possess medicinal properties (69). In the past annatto was employed most commonly as an ornamental paint, warpaint, or insect-repellant bodypaint by many of the Indian tribes of tropical America (among them the Tainos of the Greater Antilles), and even today is used by such widely separate groups as the Colorado Indians of Ecuador (65) and the Barama River Caribs of Guiana.

Today annatto is to be found cultivated close to most Carib dwellings. Formerly red *bixi* dye was much used (mixed together either with the oil obtained from the seeds of the forest tree, *Carapa guianensis*, or with that gotten from the kernel of the yattahu palm, *Rhyticoca amara*) as a body paint because of its property of protecting the skin from insect bites and from the ravages of sun and weather[47]. Island Carib prisoners taken by Columbus are also recorded to have had «... their eyes and eyebrows stained circularly around... for ostentation... and also because it gives them a ferocious appearance» (69), but whether the dye was obtained from annatto or genip is not mentioned. To obtain the dye, ripe seeds are boiled in water which is then allowed to cool at which time the seeds are rubbed in the liquid with the palms of the hands. The water, after passing through a strainer which removes the now useless seeds, is allowed to stand during which period the coloring matter is deposited as a waxy vermilion substance. The latter may be dried (with or without oil which gives it consistency) and kept in balls until needed. Carapa or yattahu oil is added when the *bixi* paint is to be used. When only a small quantity of the dye was required it could be obtained by pouring a little oil on the hands, then rubbing a

[47] According to Labat (34) this paint preserved Indian corpses from disintegration for several months.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

quantity of seeds between the palms and scraping off the resultant paint with a piece of wood or with a knife. *Bixa* body paint was mixed with powdered charcoal (derived from the wood of bois chandelle, *Erithalis fruticosa*) to moderate its brilliance.

The roots of *Bixa orellana* are sometimes used to flavour meat or sauces. Sticks used as fire drills were made of annatto wood 'also from wood of bois la glu (*Sapium caribaeum*), bois chandelle (*Erithalis fruticosa*), maho noir (*Guatteria caribaea*), and cacao (*Theobroma Cacao*), etc.'. For further uses of *bixa* as an ingredient of ritual baths see *Ocimum micranthum* and *Ipomoea pes-caprae*.

Specimen citation: 3225, 3303.

PASSIFLORACEAE. Passion-Flower Family.

Passiflora foetida Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 959. 1753.

Mariguja. — *marákwia* (cf. Tupi *marakuya*), *li mónkw* («monkey's genitals»).

This passion-flower occurs in Jamaica, Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles, and throughout tropical South America. In Dominica mariguja occurs on waste stony ground, open slopes, or in hedgerows at lower elevations.

The fruit of this wild species is eaten by the Caribs, and the leaves are made into a «tea» said to be good for colds. The tea is used also to bathe people when they are weak.

Specimen citation: 3193.

Passiflora laurifolia Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 956. 1753.

Water Lemon — Liane Pomme, Pomme de Liane (name of fruit). — *marákwia* (cf. Tupi *marakuya*).

An oft-cultivated species of the West Indies and tropical South America. The pomme de liane is a common slender climbing vine most frequent in Dominica in thickets near streams at lower elevations, particularly on the windward coast.

Caribs peel the slender stems for use as a material in spiral basketry, in the same way that the lianas known as *mébi* (*Asplundia palmatum* and *Monstera pertusa*) are employed. The fruits are edible.

Specimen citation: 108 (T), 2945, 3162, 3735.

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

A West Indian and continental tropical American tree to be found on Dominica in moist forests at middle elevations.

The wood of this species is elastic and tough and is utilized in the Antilles for general construction purposes (8). At the time of the Discovery the Tainos and Ciguayos of the West Indies painted themselves with the blue-black, fast stain obtained from genipa fruits. LOVÉN (37) states that aborigines of the Guiana coast and the upper Orinoco also painted themselves with this dye, which is used commonly in the same way by lowland Indians throughout tropical South America.

Genipa are eaten by the Island Caribs. Formerly the dark fruit stain was used on solemn occasions by the Caribs to draw decorative lines on the face (7). However, among these Indians the customary paint was the protective *bixi* (*Bixa orellana*). The fruit juice of genip also is smeared and rubbed on the body to cure diseases of the skin. The juicy pulp, along with water from stems of balisier (*Heliconia*), and the ashes from burnt leaf heart of roseau (*Gynerium*), forms a medicinal used locally against yaws.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

Geophila herbacea (Jacquin) Schumann in Engl. & Prantl, Nat. Pflf. 4: 119. 1891.

Geophila reniformis Chamisso & Schlechtendal, Linnaea 4: 137. 1829.

Petit Cappi Tourterelle.

A creeping herb found in moist woodlands in the tropical regions of both hemispheres.

A ritual bath made from this plant is used by the Caribs to unbind « spells ».

Specimen citation: no specimens collected.

Morinda citrifolia Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 176. 1753.

Feuille Froide.

This low coastal tree is a native of Malaysia but is naturalized in the West Indies. In its homeland the species has many uses.

In Dominica feuille froide is employed by the Creole population as a general medicinal plant. The leaves are frequently wrapped around rheumatic joints.